U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
April 2001

FAA Intercom

FAA Budget Request Goes to Hill

The Bush administration has asked Congress for $13.28 billion to fund the FAA in Fiscal Year 2002, a 5.8 percent increase over funding in Fiscal Year 2001.

The FAA did well compared with many federal agencies, said FAA Budget Director Brian Riley. Media reports indicated that the Bush administration was looking for cuts across the board in the Department of Transportation. Union, industry and DOT officials successfully appealed.

Administrator Jane Garvey and DOT

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FAA's Safer Skies Effort Remains On-Course

Government and industry safety experts gathered in Washington, D.C., on March 27 to report that the FAA's data-driven "Safer Skies" approach is on a steady course toward preventing both commercial and general aviation accidents. The Safer Skies Aviation Safety Expo included demonstrations of key accident prevention strategies and featured remarks by government and industry leaders.

Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta said that the key to surmounting the

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Once Shaken, FAA Employees Stir Quickly

A mobile air traffic control facility is hoisted into position at Sea-Tac.

The images are as scattered and vivid as the damage caused by the disaster itself.

On Feb. 28, FAA employees in the Seattle area shook off a major earthquake measuring 6.8 on the Richter scale and jumped into their jobs without hesitation.

Faced with a potential crisis at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport and Boeing Field (King County International), FAA employees simply rode out the rattle, then got down to work.

Despite the damage and upheaval, they got Sea-Tac's air traffic control system operating at limited capacity within 2 ½ hours of the quake. Boeing Field's system was partially restored within eight hours. At least one airline expressed surprise and appreciation for how quickly FAA employees got air traffic services up and running.

Seattle Tower Controller Brian Schimpf was working local control at the time and advised his traffic of the situation:

"Attention all aircraft, Seattle. We have a huge earthquake going on, the tower is collapsing. I say again, the tower is falling apart. Hang on everybody."

The last part of the transmission came after Schimpf had taken shelter under a console.

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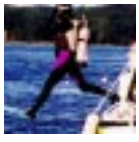
In This Issue:
FAA employees shake, rattle and roll, aid in finding the cure for muscular dystrophy, revitalize the Chesapeake Bay, work to make our skies safer, and much more.



News in Brief

Executive Listening Sessions Resume
FAA management will participate in executive listening sessions again this year as a follow-up to last year's series. The first sessions are scheduled for April 25 in the Northwest Mountain Region and April 26 in the Alaskan Region with Steve Brown, acting associate administrator for Air Traffic Services.

The purpose of these sessions — sponsored by the VOICE group — is for senior management to hear firsthand the concerns of employees in the field.

Award Nominations Sought
The FAA seeks nominations for its Excellence in Aviation Award, which recognizes significant accomplishments in aviation research.

Individuals and institutions may be nominated. Nominations must show significant impact and benefits of extended aviation research efforts and application of improvements within the aviation industry.

Nominations and supporting documentation for the award will be accepted through April 30. The nomination form can be found on the FAA's Office of Aviation Research Web site at http://research.faa.gov/aar. For additional information, contact Denise Davis at (202) 267-9426 or by e-mail at denise.davis@faa.gov.

FAA Directives Would Affect Airplane Entertainment Systems
The FAA has proposed a series of directives that would ensure flight crews can shut off in-flight entertainment systems.

A review of in-flight entertainment systems on several aircraft models revealed that these systems could remain powered despite current flight crew procedures. The agency's directives would enable crews to shut down power to entertainment systems during unusual or emergency situations.

In some cases, entertainment systems added to aircraft as after-market modifications limit the crew's ability to respond to emergencies. For instance, the flight crew might be unable to turn off a system without cutting power to required systems or pulling circuit breakers.

Compliance with the directives could affect the availability of in-seat passenger audio and video services.

The directives would affect primarily aircraft in the fleets of American, Continental and Hawaiian Airlines.

It's Cool to be Smart
Students from three elementary schools in the Atlantic City, N.J., area recently got a firsthand look at cutting edge technology thanks to the William J. Hughes Technical Center.

Forty-five sixth-grade girls took part in a variety of hands-on workshops, from flight simulation to computer operations. They got a close look at the imaging technology branch, Display Systems Replacement equipment, and weather and radar processor facilities.

FAAer Chinita Roundtree-Coleman came up with the idea to develop a program that showed schoolgirls the many facets of technology at the center. She serves on a local commission that seeks to narrow the disparity between the number of men and women who enter fields associated with science, mathematics and technology.

Carleen Genna-Stoltzfus, the center's community Outreach Program manager, helped develop the program. Several FAA employees participated.

Small Business Conference Scheduled in Southwest
The agency's Southwest Region will host the Fourth West Coast Small Business Conference, April 30 - May 2, in Fort Worth. Small business owners can learn how to contract with the FAA and other federal agencies, and obtain information about federal procurement opportunities.

Elementary students disassemble a computer during a visit to the Technical Center.

The FAA supports the Department of Transportation's outreach to small business by conducting more than 20 panel sessions and workshops during the conference.

Small businesses will have a chance to discuss their capabilities during one-on-one sessions with federal agency representatives and by exhibiting during the event. Companies with major government contracts will also be on hand to provide information about subcontracting opportunities.

Acquisition representatives from all of the FAA's regions and centers, and Headquarters, will attend.

For more information on registration and fees, contact Tony Thomas, BST Communications, at (888) 268-6505 or via e-mail at info@swr-conf.net. To register on-line, go to www.swr-conf.net.

Shop 'Til You Drop, then Learn about the FAA

It's a weekend and it's cold outside. What else is there to do but shop?

The FAA and other government agencies decided to capitalize on the opportunity presented by hundreds of thousands of shoppers to do a little community outreach.

The outreach consisted of a display at the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minn. A number of FAA organizations sent representatives to the mall over the Feb. 3-4 weekend to educate the public about the agency's mission, answer questions and give away prizes.

"The event is a wonderful opportunity to reach out to the community and generate aviation awareness," said Robert Cook, manager of the Minneapolis Civil Aviation Security Field Office. "It is a great opportunity for people to talk to their public servants."

FAA employees provided the public with information about careers in aviation, aviation education and runway safety. The grand prize included an escorted tour of the Minneapolis Tower.

Briefings Held as part of MWE Initiative

Employees from the Office of Communications, Navigation, and Surveillance Systems received professional development briefings at the Air Traffic Control System Command Center, Washington Center and the Leesburg Flight Service Station.

The briefing, part of the Model Work Environment Initiative (MWE), was arranged so Headquarters employees could view systems they have developed and implemented in an actual operational environment.

GAMA Chairman Backs Capacity Increase

Faced with the trends of surging general aviation aircraft sales and growing delays, the chairman of the General Aviation Manufacturers Association challenged the aviation industry to "increase — not ration — system capacity."

During GAMA's annual industry review and market outlook press briefing, Chairman Mike Smith urged the aviation community to work together to field new technologies, adopt new procedures and build new runways.

Smith's concern is understandable considering that the general aviation industry set records for billings and new airplane shipments for the sixth consecutive year in 2000.

General aviation aircraft producers sold more than 2,800 airplanes worth $8.6 billion last year. Billings were up 9.1 percent and shipments rose 12.5 percent from 1999. Smith predicted that 2001 would be another good year for general aviation. He cited a strong backlog of existing airplane orders and new business jet models.

The question remains, will those aircraft be able to get off the ground in today's congested skyways.

ICAO Positions Advertised

The International Civil Aviation Organization is seeking applicants for four positions. The jobs are 3-year appointments, with the first year probationary. Applications are due in API-19 by April 20.

For a copy of vacancy announcements and information on salary, qualifications, benefits and application forms, access the Web site at http://api.hq.faa.gov.

Special Agent Al Geils staffs the Runway Safety Booth at the Mall of America

Montreal
Aviation Security Officer
PC-01/01/P-4

Chief, Field Operations
Asia and Pacific
PC-01/02/P-5

Bangkok
Regional Officer
Air Traffic Management
PC-01/03/P-4

Administrative Officer
PC-01/04/P-4

One Last Holiday Note

Members of the human relations committee and controllers at the **Fort Worth Center** provided Christmas presents for 83 children at Euless Elementary School.

The **Sacramento TRACON** donated $1,425 for a single parent and her two children, ages 8 and 12.

Economic Downturn Shouldn't Slow Long-Term Aviation Growth

By 2010, the U.S. airline industry will be able to cop a familiar fast food motto: More than 1 billion served. Except, in the case of the airlines, that's 1 billion served every year.

That was perhaps the most striking prediction made at the FAA's 26th annual Commercial Aviation Forecast Conference last month. If the prediction holds true, U.S. commercial air carriers will enplane over 1 billion passengers in 2010, an increase of 44 percent over the 694 million passengers enplaned in 2000.

Another striking aspect of the forecast was the predicted four fold increase in the number of regional aircraft in U.S. regional carrier fleets by 2012. The FAA expects more than 2,000 regional jets to be flying by then, compared to around 500 today.

The popularity of regional jets reflects the flying public's preference for the comfort of a jet as opposed to propeller aircraft. In addition, the increased range of these smaller jets has opened up new opportunities for regional carriers to serve longer-haul routes and bypass congested hub airports with point-to-point service. Compared to turboprops, the new regional jets are relatively inexpensive to operate, as well.

The FAA noted that general aviation recorded its sixth consecutive year of increased aircraft shipments and record billings (see related article in News in Brief). Also, demand remains strong for travel to Latin America and the Asia/Pacific Region.

But Robert Bowles, the manager of statistics and forecast in the Office of Aviation Policy and Plans who assembled the forecast, cautioned that the predictions were based on extremely optimistic economic assumptions. "As soon as the forecast book went to printing, the short-term economic outlook soured," Bowles explained. He said that while the long-term predictions are still validated by economic models, short-term predictions might not pan out because of several factors.

Besides the downturn in the economy, increased fuel prices could push fares higher and slow the demand for aviation services. Oil producing countries in the Middle East have recently cut production to shore up oil prices.

Other risks include labor relations and industry consolidation.

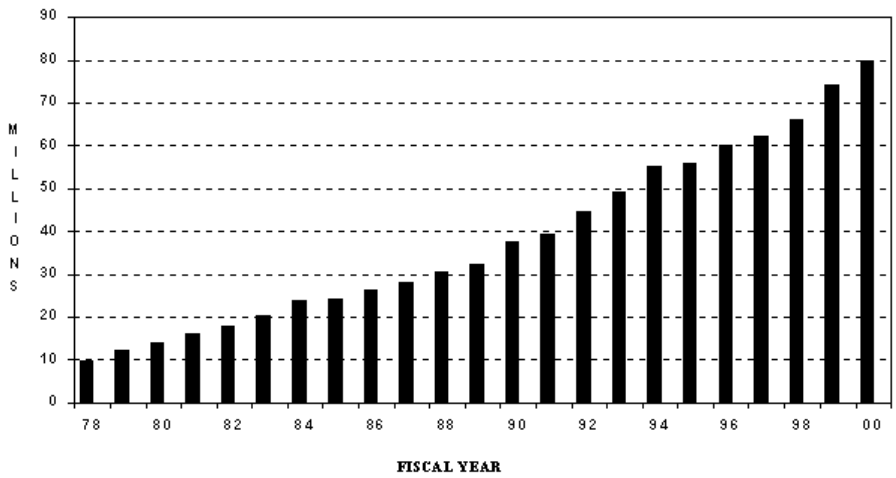
Several airlines are facing strikes this spring and summer. Resolution of contract negotiations almost certainly will lead to more expensive union contracts and higher labor costs that will have to be passed on to passengers.

Bowles also cited the airline mergers currently under consideration by the Justice Department. If these mergers are approved as proposed, the industry could be dominated by three or four very large air carriers. This could lead to less competition and higher fares.

"I think all of the risk for this year's forecasts are on the downside," he said. "There's not any economic data that suggests aviation demand is going to be greater than we predicted," Bowles said.

The Office of Policy, Planning & International Aviation sponsored the forecast conference.

U.S. Regionals/Commuters Scheduled Passenger Emplanements



People

McLean Nominated for DOT Post

The White House intends to nominate Donna McLean, the FAA's chief financial officer, to be assistant secretary of Transportation for Budget and Programs and chief financial officer.

McLean joined the agency in July 1999 after working on the House of Representative's Aviation Subcommittee for six years. The U.S. Senate must confirm McLean.

Rotorcraft Directorate Manager Named

David Downey has been selected as manager of the Rotorcraft Directorate in the Aircraft Certification Service. He also becomes a member of the Aircraft Certification Management Team in this new position.

Downey has more than 27 years of experience as an engineer, test pilot and manager in the military and at the FAA. Most recently, he served as assistant manager for the Aircraft Certification Service's Engine & Propeller Directorate.

He replaces Henry Armstrong who retired earlier this year.

Personnel System to be Modernized

The Human Resources office has begun soliciting feedback from administrative officers and staff in the lines of business about improvements for the new FAA personnel system, planning for which is now underway.

The agency plans to replace its personnel and payroll systems with a flexible, modernized central system that will be easier and faster for managers and employees to use, and minimize errors in processing employees' records.

The Human Resources team involved in the project not only want to reengineer the current system, but develop new processes to enhance employees' and managers' use. The team is comprised of representatives from most lines of business, the FAA Academy, the payroll department and the Department of Transportation.

It will focus on such areas as staffing, benefits, training, processing, compensation and time/attendance.

The two current personnel systems, CPMIS and IPPS, will be integrated into one database. Installation at the first site is expected in July 2003. Employees would have more direct access to view their educational records, official documents, insurance, health and other official information using the new system. It would require less paperwork on the part of employees as well.

Managers would be able to use the database for a variety of managerial purposes. They could determine how many employees are at a certain location and their salaries. A historical database will be included.

Eventually, the agency's payroll system, CUPS, will be incorporated into the personnel database. That is a long-term project contingent on funding.

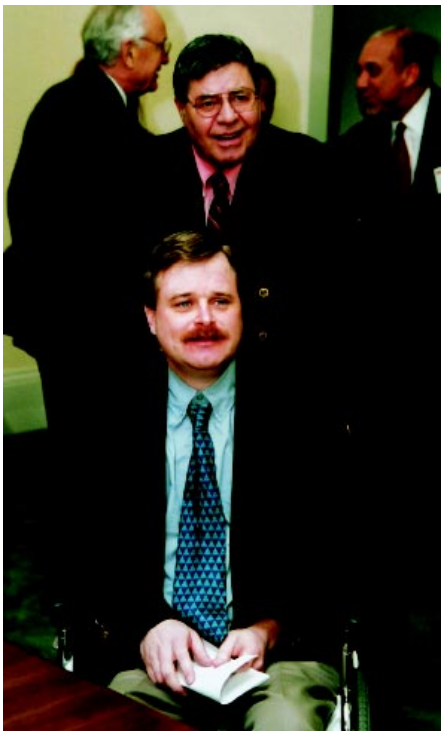
Future editions of the *FAA Intercom* will provide updates and additional information about the project.

FAAer Testifies before Congress about MD Research

FAA Controller Donavon Decker appeared before a Senate subcommittee on Feb. 27 to ask for more funding for research into muscular dystrophy.

Readers might recall an October 1999 article in the *FAA Intercom* about experimental gene therapy Decker underwent that, if successful, could go a long way toward curing a condition that affects about 250,000 Americans. The results of that therapy are due soon.

Decker, who works at the Huron (S.D.) Automated Flight Service Station, appeared before the Senate Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services to lobby for increased funding to continue research into gene and other types of therapy.



Decker and entertainer Jerry Lewis pushed for increased MD research funding during Congressional hearings.

"I told them how muscular dystrophy affected me and my family. If it wasn't for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the research would not be where it's at today." Decker also met with Senators Pete V. Domenici (R-N.M.), Tom Daschle (D-S.D.), Tim Johnson (D-S.D.) and Arlen Specter (R-Pa.).

The highlight of the trip for Decker was meeting entertainer Jerry Lewis, who also testified. Decker thanked him for the work he has done to raise money for MD research. "He's pretty much an average guy," Decker said.

Based on their Hill reception, Decker said he and representatives from the MD Association are very optimistic that research will get a significant increase in funding. MD research is funded at $19.9 million. Researchers are seeking an increase to $100 million.

Meantime, Decker awaits the results from his experimental procedure. In September 1999, doctors injected healthy genes into his foot. Six weeks later, the genes were removed. Unfortunately, a patient's death associated with gene therapy for a condition unrelated to MD delayed analysis of results from Decker's experiment.

Now, doctors are readying the results for public release in the near future. They want to see how Decker's immune system responded to the new gene and if the new protein the gene produces can be found in his muscle tissue.

FAA Intercom will report the findings when they become available. Meanwhile, Decker remains a linchpin in the Muscular Dystrophy Association's drive to increase funding and find a cure.

For this FAA Employee, the Oyster is His World

Paul Spadaro might be considered a fish out of water. After all, the cartographer works for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration office that was transferred to a more airborne agency last year.

In the newly named FAA National Aeronautical Charting Office, Spadaro helps develop navigation charts for pilots.

In his off time however, the former environmental sciences teacher is heavily involved in restoration of the Chesapeake Bay, its surrounding waters and especially its oyster population and submerged vegetation. Both have been severely depleted by over-harvesting and pollution.

Oysters are vital to the aquatic environment because they act as filters to remove pollutants from the water. An adult oyster can filter as many as 50 gallons of water per day.

The vegetation provides a safe habitat for the oysters. But as the oyster population diminished, pollution increased and water clarity declined. The sunlight needed by the vegetation to thrive disappeared in the murk, and so did the vegetation.

Paul Spadaro

NOAA divers are helping the Chesapeake take a giant stride toward restoring its oyster population.

The Magothy River Association — which Spadaro joined in 1986 and now heads — is one of many local volunteer groups that formed oyster “gardens” on floats in the water. When they mature, the oysters are seeded in areas throughout the bay.

The association pioneered a similar vegetation “farm” three years ago to grow underwater grasses in floats near the surface of the water, where they have the best access to light. Eventually, this vegetation will be planted in the bay. In the meantime, Maryland environmental officials use data collected from the vegetation farms to isolate other problems that might diminish plant life.

Spadaro’s enthusiasm spread to co-workers, who have volunteered for environmental projects. These volunteers include several divers who monitor oyster reefs for signs of growth. The divers have played such an important role that NOAA has set up an underwater habitat assessment facility at Anne Arundel Community College in Maryland.

The Magothy River Association now works with the college to train volunteer divers to operate in tricky conditions where visibility is usually limited to about one foot and uncharted currents pose risks. Divers are blindfolded and instructed to perform certain tasks to replicate the conditions in which they dive.

Divers also are assigned to locate oyster reefs from old survey charts dating back a century. If oysters still grow at these spots, they mark a prime area for future oyster seeding.

Spadaro is proud of the progress the association has made in the last few years. Seeing so many different groups interacting and moving forward is the reward for his work. “I provide the avenue and the programs to help volunteers restore the bay,” he said.

Recognition

Dick Rodine, deputy director of the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center, received the Department of Transportation's Environment Achievement Award for "Education and Outreach, Individual."

Ron Morgan, former Air Traffic director, will have his name placed on the National Aviation and Space Exploration Wall of Honor at the National Air and Space Museum. The Professional Women Controllers organization nominated Morgan for the honor in appreciation for his outstanding support of women in air traffic control.

Great Lakes Region presented its Aviation Maintenance Technician Award to **Neil Pobanz** of the Springfield (Ill.) Flight Standards District Office.

Mary Lou Dordan from the Alaskan Region is the winner of the "2001 Dr. Mervin K. Strickler, Jr. Award for Aviation Education Leadership." The award is given by the National Coalition for Aviation Education.

The **Fargo (N.D.) Flight Standards Office** received the 2001 Customer Service Excellence Award from the National Air Transportation Association. Fargo was selected for its "superior communications, consistent enforcement and a willingness to educate the public."

James Clemons, logistics management specialist in the Southwest Region Logistics Division, has been selected to receive an honorary award from the Office of Aviation Medicine.

On behalf of the Commercial Aviation Safety Team and the General Aviation Joint Steering Committee, Associate Administrator for Regulation and Certification **Tom McSweeny** awarded special recognition to some of the people who have contributed to the success of Safer Skies: Paul Fiduccia, Small Aircraft Manufacturing Association; Ted Mallory, Northwest Airlines; Paul Russell, Boeing Company; and Ron Swanda, General Aviation Manufacturers Association.

McSweeny also recognized several FAA employees, including: **Mike Basehore**, Office of Research; **Lowell Foster**, Aircraft Certification; **Nancy Lane**, Aircraft Certification; **Greg Michael**, Flight Standards; **Kyle Olsen**, Aircraft Certification; **Jay Pardee**, Aircraft Certification; **Barbara Pisaro**, Flight Standards; and **Jerry Tegen**, Flight Standards.

A Hero in Their Midst

The Georgia Aviation & Technical College dedicated its new aviation maintenance technology wing to a recently retired FAA employee.

James Perry oversaw the college's aviation maintenance technology (AMT) program from January 1995 until his retirement in February 2000, as part of his job as an FAA maintenance inspector.

Randall Peters (left) , president of Heart of Georgia College, congratulates Perry.

The college said Perry not only provided regulatory guidance and clarification as the college developed its program, "he was also our mentor, teacher and friend throughout the very difficult and complex FAA certification process, and beyond."

The college went on to say that, "Our AMT program will continue to reach and demand the highest standards of professional excellence from our faculty, staff, and students, because that is what Mr. Perry taught us. We had a hero in our midst in Mr. James O. Perry."

FAA Budget Submitted

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Secretary Norman Mineta were able to convince the administration to request full funding for AIR-21 requirements set by Congress.

The Bush administration requested a 5.5 percent increase in Operations funding to $6.87 billion in FY 2002; a 10 percent increase for Facilities & Equipment funding to $2.91 billion; $3.3 billion for airport grants, up 3.3 percent from FY 2001; and a less than 1 percent increase in research, to $188 million.

Traditionally, funding for the Operations portion of the FAA budget has been very tight and it remains so under the FY 2002 budget request.

The *FAA Intercom* will carry additional budget information as details become available.

When the quake ended about 30 seconds later, the tower still stood, but it was seriously damaged and temporarily useless. The tower cab looked like, well, like an earthquake had hit it. Fluorescent lights swung from the ceiling and banged into each other. Windows had shattered and the cab was buffeted by wind and noise. Equipment dangled from the ceiling or lay wrecked on the floor.

Jamie Erdt, assistant air traffic manager, saw Supervisor Debbie Hart emerge from beneath a console with ceiling debris on her head, but otherwise fine. Schimpf was standing on a console trying to fix a shade that was blocking his vision. Controller Bud Pangan dug his headset cord out from beneath the debris and directed aircraft under ground control, then began gathering whatever equipment could be transferred to the mobile tower.

What tower employees didn't realize until much later was how precarious their situation was. Seven of the eight mullions supporting the roof had been damaged and four of them were broken off their mounts. Hart immediately began notifying authorities about damage to the cab.

The Seattle Automated Flight Service Station (AFSS) immediately assessed the operational capabilities of the towers and airports. Some 21 notices to airmen were issued in the first hour after the quake. The AFSS also provided clearance authority for Boeing Field Tower, which had only two frequencies when it became semi-operational.

Meanwhile, back in the Sea-Tact Tower, Erdt accounted for all the controllers on duty. Remembering that an employee in the office below had suffered heart problems a week earlier, Erdt ran down the stairs to make sure she was all right. The employee was fine and so were operations in approach control. That part of the tower operation survived unscathed. "I was taken aback," Erdt said. "Everything looked normal."

The mobile tower at Boeing Field sits atop three shipping containers to provide better visibility for controllers.

Still, she feared an aftershock could topple the tower and ordered an evacuation. It took about 10 minutes to land the last plane. Then, the tower staff left the building.

While tower personnel relocated, Seattle TRACON diverted Seattle-bound aircraft to other airports. Seattle Center then handled TRACON traffic until that facility could be inspected and determined safe. The TRACON then resumed operation at a reduced rate until the temporary tower was in place.

Starting from Scratch

Vic Owen, manager of the Sea-Tac Radar System Support Center (SSC), was in his facility's operations room when the quake hit. The operations room monitors all FAA systems at Sea-Tac.

Owen and his coworkers steadied the stacked computers and monitors to keep them from falling. "We just kind of rocked and rolled with it 'til it settled down," he said. Once the shaking stopped, the SSC staff quickly determined that most of the FAA systems were still running. But it was clear the tower cab was out of operation.

Airway Facilities staff loaded air traffic control equipment into their vehicles and whisked controllers across the field to set up a makeshift ATC facility in a hangar. Later, air traffic operations moved into a mobile tower brought from Auburn, Wash.

Owen was impressed at how orderly the FAA response was considering the buzz of activity at the airport.

During a lull, Owen called Boeing Field tower for a damage report. A tower window was broken and computer equipment damaged. Air traffic operations moved to a fire station tower using emergency communication equipment. Limited air traffic operations resumed at 5:45 p.m. because the primary runway had sustained significant damage, reducing the need for full ATC service.

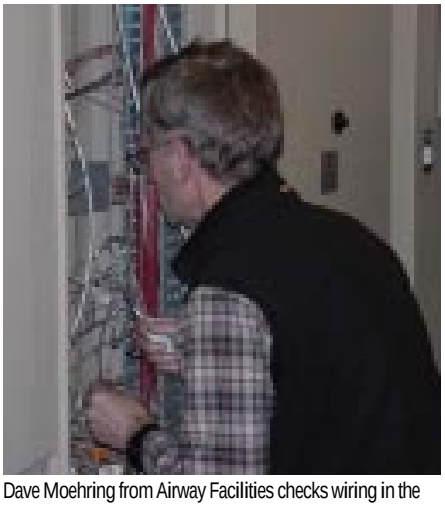
Two temporary towers were

established at the field. Boeing Field Tower later was found to be structurally sound and will be occupied after upgrades are made.

George Baty, manager of the Pacific Northwest Systems Management Office (SMO), was at an offsite meeting when the walls began to shake. He jumped into his car and headed back to his office in Auburn, where he set up a media center and opened a communications bridge that kept information flowing between the Seattle area and FAA Headquarters.

Communications around the area were jammed. Since his office couldn't communicate directly with Sea-Tac, Baty created a communications loop with the Salt Lake City SMO, which relayed information from Sea-Tac back to Auburn and vice versa.

Owen said the problem with communications at Sea-Tac was an eye opener and provided a good lesson for the FAA. Cell phones were useless and telecommunications lines were in damaged facilities, not in the makeshift facilities where they were needed. Instead, Airway Facilities employees relied on handheld VHF air/ground radios, using an unassigned flight check frequency.



Dave Moehring from Airway Facilities checks wiring in the Sea-Tac equipment room.

The view from the mobile tower at Sea-Tac.

Louie Aguilar, Airway Facilities manager at Sea-Tac, said that when he went to check on his employees immediately after the quake, they had already jumped into action. "The first concern was making sure we could keep providing service," he said.

Aguilar said he was amazed at how two or three people would jump on an idea as soon as it was mentioned. "It sort of looked like tiger teams just scurrying all over the place and doing what they need to do perfectly."

Airway Facilities employees knew immediately which contractors and FAA regional employees they needed to contact to erect a mobile tower. Others set up a database to establish administrative, overtime and equipment replacement costs.

Aguilar credited the Seattle NAS Implementation Center for helping arrange the mobile tower setup. Employees from the center worked through a rainy night stringing fiber optic cables from radar antennae to the temporary towers, while the field maintenance party put in long hours constructing stairs, walkways and other infrastructure.

NAS employees continued to provide engineering and support until all the bugs were worked out of the mobile tower and the temporary fiber optic system. After the mobile operation was running, ANI dug a trench more than a thousand feet long to bury new fiber optic cables.

Besides the NAS Implementation Center, Air Traffic received support from the operations branch of Airway Facilities and a field maintenance party that was indispensable in returning air traffic control operations to CAT-III status, Owen said.

The Boise SSC delivered another mobile tower that was used during transition at Sea-Tac, and the Spokane SSC delivered a trailer full of portable air traffic control equipment.

Airway Facilities engineers working with Seattle NAVCOM/Environmental SSC staff helped reroute controls for the instrument landing and approach light systems to a remote site at the TRACON.

Regional Headquarters Takes a Licking

It's said that Northwest Mountain Regional

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Shake, Rattle and Roll

continued from page 9

Photo: Dianne Speed

Schimpf (left) and Pangan handled local and ground traffic after the earthquake.

Headquarters was the second most damaged federal building in the Seattle area, although damage was confined mostly to furniture and computers.

Employees from the Logistics and Information Technology offices worked several days straight to put offices back together in time for a return to work on the Monday following the earthquake. Every workstation was checked to make sure each was physically stable and operational.

For a time, operations were centered around the flagpole in front of the building before being transferred to facilities in Auburn. Some employees did return to Headquarters the day of the earthquake to run the regional operations center.

Management kept employees abreast of the repair effort through recorded hotline and voice mail broadcast messages and e-mail bulletin boards.

When they returned to Headquarters, employees found an "earthquake logistics checklist" in their offices on which they could list immediate needs. Employee Assistance Plan specialists hosted briefings for employees who were finding it hard to deal with the emotional aftershocks of the earthquake.

Regional Administrator Larry Andriesen said he was impressed with the dedication and resourcefulness of FAA employees.

FAA Maintains Course for 10-Year Plan

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challenges in aviation safety is to get everyone working in a spirit of partnership to solve problems. "The Safer Skies program is a solid testament to what strong partnerships can accomplish," he said.

Administrator Jane Garvey put the issue of increased aviation delays into perspective. Even though last summer's delays were the worst ever, not one commercial aviation accident occurred during that period. "That perfectly safe summer is testimony to everyone here today," she said.

Industry participation included representatives from the Air Transport Association of America, General Aviation Manufacturers Association and National Business Aviation Association.

Three years into a 10-year plan, Safer Skies has already produced 13 actions that are being used in day-to-day commercial operations to prevent accidents. The Commercial Aviation Safety Team (CAST) is making progress to reach the goal of reducing aviation fatalities by 80 percent by 2007. One of the benefits of the program is that industry is voluntarily implementing agreed-upon recommendations.

For example, airlines are using improved inspection methods to prevent uncontained engine failures and are incorporating improved training, new standard operating procedures and technology to prevent controlled flight into terrain (CFIT) accidents.

They also have developed intervention strategies for approach and landing accidents and continue to develop strategies for runway incursions, loss of control, and weather-related accidents.

The General Aviation Joint Steering Committee has completed analyses for CFIT and weather-related accidents. Intervention strategies differ from those for commercial aviation due to the unique general aviation operating environment. The GA team is working on improving low-altitude procedures and awareness training to prevent CFIT accidents. Improved weather information and training, as well as better low-altitude procedures and synthetic vision technology are being developed to prevent weather-related accidents.

Other areas under analysis include pilot decision-making, loss of control, survivability and runway incursions.

Associate Administrator for Regulation and Certification Tom McSweeny awarded special recognition to some of the people who have contributed to the success of Safer Skies. See Recognition on p. 5.

Mineta meets with particpants at the Safer Skies Expo.

What's Up, Doc?

Do you want to get away from it all sometimes? Really get away from it all? Like leaving the earth? Then set a course for the stars with Dr. Woody Davis, attorney-physician.

During business hours, Davis prepares regulations and policies in the FAA's chief counsel's office. But in his off-hours, he is one of the select few to whom NASA has given the title of Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) Solar System Ambassador. "I'm basically an educator," Davis said. "The objective is to represent JPL activities to the public."

JPL is the organization in NASA responsible for the deep space vehicles sent to other planets, asteroids, comets, and the sun. Think of the striking photos of desert landscapes sent back to earth by the Mars Pathfinder or the giant volcanoes on Jupiter's moon, Io, seen by the Galilieo probe. The vehicles sent by JPL gather important information about the beginnings of our universe and galaxy. The work of Davis and other NASA ambassadors help make commonplace the names of JPL's vehicles and missions among astronomers and non-astronomers alike.

Davis spends a lot of his nights in astronomical pursuits, transporting his audience light years away to the farthest reaches of our galaxy and the universe beyond.

He is a natural for the position. He's friendly, devoted to the subject and can break down complex scientific concepts in a nanosecond. And the awe he has felt since childhood about stars and planets is still evident when he speaks. "What I really like [about astronomy] is it allows you to concentrate on things that are very different from events going on around you. It's a great time to be an astronomer because we're finding more and more exciting information about our solar system."

Davis speaks to church, school and community groups and assists in the Smithsonian-sponsored astronomy classes held at the U.S. Naval Observatory in Washington. He also volunteers at Sky Meadows, a Virginia park where amateur astronomers gather to watch the heavens. Stargazing sessions at the park begin April 21 and run through November from dusk until 11 p.m.

So what's hot on this astronomer's top 10 list?

Projects associated with Mars look interesting because it appears that planet might be able to support life. Earlier this year, the NEAR (Near Earth Asteroid Rendezvous) - Shoemaker vehicle became the first man-made object to land on an asteroid. Information gathered from the Eros asteroid will help in evaluating the "Big-Bang" theory of the universe, Davis said. "If you buy the theory, asteroids are the rocky fragments left over from the formation of the solar system," he explained. The asteroid is likely substantially older than Earth itself.

Other interesting missions include Galileo's observations of the Jovian system, Cassini's voyage to Saturn, the upcoming launch of the Mars Odyssey and the continuing missions of Ulysses, Deep Space One, and Stardust.

While he believes that some form of intelligent life exists in the universe, he doubts we've had any contact with visitors from other planets. "The vastness of our solar system, much less the galaxy, is beyond comprehension. Anybody or anything who can transport themselves across that vastness probably wouldn't be too interested in us."

Davis teaches an astronomy course for the Smithsonian Institution at the U.S. Naval Observatory.

By day, Dr. Davis is an Earth-bound man. But at night, he finds a new life in the skies. "Every night we see something different. If it's not comets or satellites, it's moons passing in different phases. The ballet of objects above us is awe inspiring."

Fire Damages Habitat for Humanity House

The Habitat for Humanity home built by FAA and other federal employees last year was severely damaged by fire, Jan. 25.

All six members of the Johnson family escaped without injury, but will be unable to return to their home until the middle of this month, at the earliest.

A candle started the fire in a child's room. Two of the upstairs bedrooms were destroyed and three of the children lost almost all their possessions, including the presents they had received just a month before for Christmas. There also was extensive smoke and water damage to the first floor.

The family was scattered among relatives immediately after the blaze, but have since been reunited in a rental house nearby. The rent and cost of rebuilding the damaged house are covered by an insurance policy held by Habitat for Humanity.

In an article in the November 2000 issue of the *FAA Intercom*, FAAer Gary Klingler, one of the project leads, said FAA employees and the Johnson family "decided we've kind of adopted each other."

That was evident in the way FAA employees rallied like family for a second time around the Johnsons after the fire. They collected two truckloads of clothes, as well as some games, for the family. Klingler is now working to collect some furniture.

Klingler, assistant air traffic manager at the Cleveland Center, said Mrs. Johnson was delighted with the support she'd received from the agency. "They're doing surprisingly well," he said. "They're just happy they're back together now."

He said his coworkers who helped build the house are relieved that nobody was hurt. The death of a pet cat from smoke inhalation drove home to the family and FAA employees just how tragic the fire might have been, Klingler said.

Airlines Expand Customer Service Pledge

Feeling the heat from angry passengers, negative media reports and the prospect of Congressional intervention, major U.S. carriers made new pledges to improve customer service and assist in minimizing delays.

The Air Transport Association, which represents leading U.S. airlines, announced the second phase of the voluntary customer service commitment made to Congress last year.

Airlines have been hit recently with reports of poor customer service. A recent Department of Transportation report identified several areas in which airlines needed to make significant improvement. Responding to the report, several Congressmen, including Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), vowed to introduce legislation to ensure passenger rights.

Among the voluntary actions was the ATA's commitment to form a task force with representatives from airlines, airports and the FAA that would recommend how to ensure customers get accurate and timely information on delays and cancellations.

The Air Transport Association also said it was "willing to accept the challenge" of rectifying problems with those flights that were chronically delayed or cancelled for factors that were within airlines' control.

Carriers said they would ask the DOT to pass a rule on compensation for passengers who were bumped from their flights and to devise a more accurate calculation of the numbers of bags carried and mishandled.

The first phase of the airlines' commitment has had mixed reviews. The Associated Press reports that DOT Inspector General Ken Mead feels the federal government should be prepared to shift flights away from busy airports during peak travel times if airlines don't do so themselves. Raising landing fees or restricting takeoffs and landings during peak hours are two methods being considered.

The FAA, meanwhile, is preparing a report that would set airport benchmarks — i.e., establishing the maximum number of takeoffs and landings that an airport can handle each hour. That report is expected this spring.

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